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Hours: Monday–Friday  
8:00 am - 4:30 pm

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**Office Closings**

May 26, 2008 Memorial Day



***Beware of Crop Insurance Rebating Schemes***

With the spring sales closing date for many Federal crop insurance policies right around the corner, crop insurance agents have stepped up their marketing efforts. The Risk Management Agency (RMA) has received reports from producers and agents that some aggressive marketers have been approaching producers with rebate offers. These schemes promise lower insurance premiums, refunds, dividends, or items of value tied to crop insurance purchases. Most of these activities are illegal.

RMA reminds all Federal crop insurance program participants that it is now coordinating with state regulators to take appropriate regulatory action against all those who are found to promote or participate in such schemes. Producers who are found to participate in illegal rebating activities will not only lose their crop insurance coverage but will also lose eligibility in all USDA programs. Producers and agents can report suspicions of illegal rebating to the OIG Hotline: **1-800-424-9121**.

***Not too Late To Return Your 2007 Ag Census Form***

The 2007 Census of Agriculture, the only source of consistent and comprehensive agricultural data for every state and county in the nation, was mailed out to agricultural producers across the United States last December with a Feb 4<sup>th</sup> due date for return. Officials at the National Agricultural Statistics Service say that while the deadline has passed, completed forms are still being accepted.

Conducted every five years by the U.S. Department of Agriculture's National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS), the Census provides detailed data covering nearly every facet of U.S. agriculture. Government organizations, lawmakers, town planners and individual farm operations can use this vital information to help them plan for future facilities, services and community growth.

Producers can return their forms by mail or, for the first time, they have the convenient option of filling out the Census online. For more information about the Census, visit [www.agcensus.usda.gov](http://www.agcensus.usda.gov). The Census is your voice, your future and your responsibility.

***Acreage Reporting***

Acreage reporting time will soon be here. Please remember that filing an accurate acreage report for all crops and land uses, including failed acreage and prevented planting acreage, can prevent the loss of benefits for a variety of programs.

Failed acreage must be reported within 15 days of the disaster event and before disposition of the crop. Prevented planting must be reported no later than 15 days after the final planting date.

Acreage reports are required for many Farm Service Agency programs. For crops other than NAP (Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program) crops, acreage reports are to be certified by the July 15th deadline.



### **Continuous CRP Available**

USDA has recently indicated there will not be general signups scheduled for the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) in 2008. The budget for FY 2008 assumes no available funding for CRP general signups. However, environmentally sensitive acreage qualifying for the Continuous CRP will still be eligible for enrollment. These targeted programs will remain funded, and continue to provide a heightened environmental benefit on select areas.



### **Sodbuster, Swampbuster**

Most Farm Service Agency programs require compliance with sodbuster and swampbuster provisions. These provisions require producers to follow an approved conservation system on all highly erodible land planted to an annual crop as determined by the Natural Resources Conservation Service.



Be sure to have determinations made on any new land you plan to plant to annual crops. If you plan to plant a

different crop on your current cropland, check with NRCS to assure the new crop will qualify under your conservation system.

Swampbuster provisions state that converting a wetland to make possible the planting of a crop will result in the loss of all USDA benefits. To avoid this possibility it is strongly recommended that producers check with NRCS before starting to work in the fields. For additional information please contact Ray Covino of NRCS at 860-688-7725 ext.139.

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